



Flood Caucus Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN: UPDATE 2013

FLOOD CAUCUS MEETING

FEBRUARY 13, 2013, 1:30 P.M – 4:30 P.M.

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE POLICY- 815 S STREET, SACRAMENTO

Meeting Purpose:

The California Water Plan (CWP) Flood Caucus met to do a walkthrough of the latest draft of the Flood Resource Management Strategy (RMS), and to get an update on the progress of the California Flood Future Report.

The California Water Plan (CWP) Flood Caucus meeting materials can be found online here:

<http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials/index.cfm?subject=feb1313-pm>

Meeting Goals:

- Review and Discuss Updated Resource Management Strategy
- Provide Overview of Flood Future Report Roll-out and Review Schedule
- Provide input on Key Flood Management Messages for CWP Vol. 1

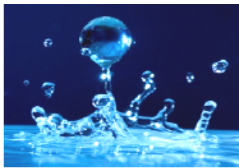
Attendance: (See Attached)

Action Items:

#	Item	Owner	Due Date
1.	On the Management Actions table, the cost column will be revised to clarify terms “low” “medium” and “high”. The flood team will clarify this in the next draft.	Flood RMS team	Next Draft
2.	Iovanka Todt (FMA) flagged paragraphs 3&4 in the “Potential Costs of Flood Management” section as belonging in the “Potential Benefits” section of the document.	Flood RMS team	Next Draft
3.	On the second page of “Potential Costs” under the “Climate Change Considerations and Implications” section, Al Herson requested that the document include the concepts of “retreat” and “land acquisition easements”	Flood RMS team	Next Draft
4.	Following discussion on the “Recommendations” section, Lisa Beutler flagged that the “Pursue Stable Funding and Create Incentives” section needed to explain governance structures, including Federal issues that translate to California and locals. This relates directly to funding flood management activities.	Flood RMS team	Next Draft
5.	Flood Team to incorporate feedback received in this meeting and text comments into next draft.	All	3/15/13

Announcements:

- Jenny Marr (DWR) announced the April 3-5 Water 360 Integrated Water Management Summit & Integrated Regional Water Management Conference in Sacramento.
- Terri Wegener (DWR) asked that caucus members submit written comments on draft RMS to the team by Friday, February 22.



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Welcome and Introductions:

Lisa Beutler (Executive Facilitator for the California Water Plan) and Terri Wegener (DWR) welcomed the meeting participants and led introductions around the room.

Updated Flood Resource Management Strategy (RMS)

- *Goals for the updated draft*
- *General Overview – Walk Through*

Terri Wegener delivered a short presentation updating the caucus on the progress of the Flood RMS. Ms. Wegener described that the one of the goals of the current draft was to move some concepts to Volume 1 of the California Water Plan. The RMS presented at this meeting reflected the perspective that not all of the content in the previous version belonged in this volume.

Flood RMS Group Discussion

- *Document Review*

Lisa Beutler led stakeholders on a detailed walkthrough of the Flood RMS document, proceeding section by section. Stakeholder comments were recorded, and discussions summarized below.

Discussion began with the section “Flood Management in California” on page 4-1:

- Suggestion to reference the 2007 Flood legislation, and cross-reference the Land Use RMS to establish context.
- The bullet list at the bottom of the first page was noted to contain a double word, and spelling error
- One stakeholder responded to an initial review of the introduction “We haven’t really captured what Integrated Flood Management (IFM) and Integrated Water Management (IWM) are. It is still at arm’s length. Traditional flood management has been directed by an imperative of separating people from flood waters. But IWM is about balance – including protection of the environment, enhancement of the community etc. There is a bigger pallet of issues that are not captured well in the introduction – We are asking Flood Managers to switch gears here.”
- An example case study or two would be really helpful to explaining the concept of Flood Management practiced from an IWM perspective.
- The process of implementation needs to be discussed here – early in the document.

Facilitator Lisa Beutler asked reviewers to direct their attention to the text box “Flood Management within the Context of an Integrated Water Management Approach” on page two:

- Comment: The new approach is “designing for floods”, the underlying theme is acknowledging the underlying functions of floods – learning to live with the risk of flooding and to benefit from them. That concept is missing in the text box.

There was discussion about terminology used throughout the document:



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- The term IFM is not present, but there is a larger discussion behind whether or not it should appear in the document.
- The Flood Future Report did not use the term IFM.
- The phrase “accommodating floods” received a positive response from the group when suggested.
- Words like “retreat” have a political context that needs to be acknowledged.
- Natural floodplain restoration may be a nonstructural approach, but we need to be clear that we are not hopping back and forth when we refer to them.
- Best Management Practices appears in Recommendations 4,7, and 15. It should be defined earlier.
- The term “Resources Agency” appears in the Recommendations at the request of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Page 4-4, “Non-Structural Approaches”:

- A request to add language “willing buyer/willing seller” when discussion land acquisition
- Some discussion around providing adequate data to policy and decision makers regarding flood risk
- The Land Use Planning RMS should be cross-referenced; there is room for another paragraph on prudent land use. It was noted in follow-up discussion that there is a dedicated section that outlines relationships to other RMS’s in the Water Plan.
- One participant highlighted a DWR document that breaks down different bills and how they affect general plans. It could be a resource for the RMS.
- Under Floodplain Management - “The land acquisition portion and the retreat portion could use a reminder that recreation is often used in both floodplain management areas. To help with the economic sustainability of those projects, could we talk a little about how recreation helps offset costs, and make those strategies more palatable to locals? On the issue of retreat, certainly our coastline is the buffer zone that has been set aside; those areas are a huge benefit to the state of California for recreation. Providing these recreation opportunities can expand this concept. There are others examples of this besides coastal”.
- The document discusses levee setbacks, but doesn’t really explain why we would do that.
- The concept of retreat associated with coastal building was flagged. Retreat can occur in other areas besides the coastline.
- “Grant incentives” was a key term used in discussion that was suggested to help navigate some of the more sensitive political issues.
- Under “Building Codes and Floodproofing” – Some rural buildings are not “historical” they are just old. Requiring changes to buildings from the 1850’s is just not feasible. There could be an exemption or waiver process. Also, building codes as an issue are not uniform across the state, this should be stated.
- On the issue of retreat – critical infrastructure in those areas needs to be addressed. Additional bookends in this section are needed.
- A suggestion was made to reference (possibly as an attachment) the building codes that have moved through.



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- On the intersection of “retreat” and “climate change” – In coastal areas where retreat may be necessary, we have shoreline and associated habitats that are also threatened. Behind the beach there are very important marshes and wetlands that may be lost due to climate change.

Page 4-5, “Natural Floodplain Function Restoration”:

- One comment suggested “Change to Conservation and Restoration” instead of Natural Floodplain Restoration”.
- “I would like to see if we could note that natural flood plain function can be pursued to enhance ecosystems and also protect communities in the first paragraph – one sentence after natural floodplain function restoration. I want to emphasize that this also benefits health and safety.”
- In past drafts, the document has had the sequencing of sections as “Structural, Non-Structural, and Emergency Response”. This draft is transitional, and is organized differently.
- Language was suggested from an online participant – “we have lost the vast majority of our natural systems. A huge restoration effort is ideal. It also helps ecologically, and helps reduce our flood risks. You also increase the flood flow capacity, and interconnectedness of systems.”
- The Los Angeles River could be an example used in this section.

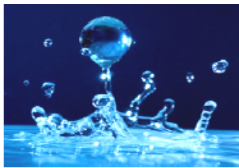
Page 4-6, Structural:

- Under “coastal structures and armoring”, please insert the word “maybe” into the statement discussing the justification of costs.
- “We are missing the idea that some flood structures attenuate peak flows. Debris mitigation structures also do this by creating a reservoir/buffer. We could also talk about the role of detention basins”
- What about “soft-bottom vs. hard bottom”
- There is only one statement that says that there is a **portfolio** of management approaches. Somehow, that discussion needs to be elevated.
- Meeting participants discussed if “natural infrastructure” should be discussed in this section or elsewhere.
- Under reservoirs – It should be noted that they are multi-purpose. The context of this tool should be clarified.
- Discussion: “What about the example of the middle reach of the Russian River – it doesn’t have proper function because of erosion. Some solutions may be structural, and some may be non- structural. The dam changed the hydrograph to create a different flood problem that the dam won’t solve.”
- On page seven, new text edits will be received from CalEMA.

Page 4-7, Connections to other Resource Management Strategies:

- The Water Recycling RMS should be included in this section. Most recycled water is produced to promote overland flow of streams.
- A better example is needed under the Land Use RMS.

Potential Benefits of Flood Management:



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- One suggestion was to add “Hydropower” in this section. Discussion followed, but did not resolve.
- Please add the word “resilience” in the opening statement under flood risk reduction benefits.

Management Actions Table:

- One participant asked that the terms “high”, “low”, and “medium” be defined in the key.

Potential Costs of Flood Management

- Facilitator Lisa Beutler opened discussion on this section by noting that it does not include “avoided costs”.
- Paragraphs 3&4 were flagged as belonging in the benefits section.
- Discussion over figures/numbers/calculations:
 - Though there is a separate financing plan, these numbers do belong in this section.
 - The projects represented are mostly multi-benefit, but some are single purpose flood management. Sometimes these projects have multiple funding sources – authors took care not to “double count” these numbers. For example, O&M and Planning costs are not counted.
 - Some of the numbers are sourced from the Flood Future Report.
 - The \$100 Billion statistic in the first paragraph was flagged as “scary”
 - “Part of the story should be 1) The Multi-objective approach will be more expensive upfront. However, you achieve economies of scale by looking for potentially positive outcomes that translate to benefits from increased water supply. 2) All of the things that don’t cost capital save money. These non-structural things need to be accounted for as an offset. The opportunity here is to emphasize how flood managers can make wise decisions in terms of financial planning and insert this philosophy of saving money in the long run.”
- One stakeholder commented that there was nothing in the section on seismic retrofit.

Climate Change

- Note - this section is not written by the flood team, there is a Climate Change group from DWR that authors this. Feedback received will be forwarded on to them.
- “On the first paragraph, under adaptation – I think we should include retreat, and land acquisition easements.”
- “On mitigation, non-structural solutions would be less intense than structural.”

Implementation Issues and Challenges Related to Flood Management

- Lisa Beutler emphasized that this section describes “What is getting in the way of getting this done”. Concepts should show up here or in the benefits section before they appear in recommendations. Also, some ideas in this section overlap with the California Water Plan Volume 1.
- There is an incorrect reference to the article by Mike Dettinger.



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- There may need to be stronger ties between this section and the RMS Recommendations section.
- Remove the phrase “implementing flood management at initiatives” – what we are really doing is tackling challenges in implementing flood risk reduction in IWM.
- The first paragraph of the section should be made more general.
- On Issue 1: Inadequate and Unstable Funding and Incentives
 - The California flood prevention law talks about how recreation must be designed into flood control projects funded by federal agencies, and that those facilities be funded by California - Which means that a federally funded project may still need state funding for recreation facilities. This has been a problem for State Water Project facilities when state money has been specifically made unavailable for improvements along the State Water Project. We need to address that in issue #1. The issue is that it (recreation) is required but not funded.
 - There should be a discussion about the shift in the availability of Federal funding. Traditionally Federal funding has been the largest source for flood management in the Federal/State/local funding mix, but now that is changing.
- On Issue 3: Inadequate Public and Policymaker Awareness and Understanding of Flood Risk –
 - Terms like 100 year and 500 year event need to be clearly defined. They are easily misunderstood by public and policymakers. This combined with NFIP issues and FEMA maps causes jurisdictions to focus disproportionately on 100 year events. In fact, most of the 1987 flooding in the Sacramento Valley took place outside the 100 year floodplain.
 - “Policymakers need updated data and maps from the State and FEMA in order to make better decisions.” More language like this is needed in this section to soften the “editorial tone” of this section. This is fundamentally about awareness and understanding. Perhaps if better data were in front of decision makers – then they would make better decisions. The goal here should be to improve awareness and understanding of floods and flood risk.
 - The entire language of risk is very difficult to communicate to the public and decision makers.
 - There are people who live in areas that flood every year and they have adapted. Some people live in this way, and we should separate that and create the nuance. Flooding is not a problem for everybody who deals with flood events. Floods are also defined/measured differently by local communities, and various flood managers. There is a distinction between frequent, local flooding and infrequent very large floods.
 - There are additional issues not mentioned in this section regarding the 200 year building requirement.
 - IWM presents a risk in itself of putting flood disturbance back into the landscape where it doesn’t necessarily exist now. There can be a conflict of ecological function in IWM to accommodate floods, and efforts to sustain existing and future development in the flood plains.
 - Lisa Beutler summarized the lengthy discussion on Issue 3 –



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- Flood risk is complicated
- Flood risk is specific to where you are
- Flood risk is a moving target
- Levels of government use different terms as they meet different standards and requirements.
- Concepts appearing in Issue 3 should be interwoven throughout the documents – appearing early and often. There is also significant overlap with Issue 4: A complex and Fragmented Governance Structure Impedes Agency Alignment and Systems Approach.
- Additional discussion took place on a recent Supreme Court ruling relating to floods in the Mississippi River Basin, and the Paterno decision.
 - There may be local resistance to any kind of change to the flood system, because of questions relating to liability. There may be an opportunity in the RMS to discuss liability.

Recommendations

- Facilitator Lisa Beutler began the discussion on Recommendations by responding to comments about the California Water Plan Progress Report process by noting that all recommendations should try to be measurable, and that there should be a responsible party mentioned. Specificity is valued in the recommendations.
- The term “Best Management Practices” appears in 4, 7, and 15 – it should be defined earlier. The State Water Boards have specific grants based on their definition of BMPs, but that is a practice related to stormwater management.
- One participant asked that Recommendations avoid using the word “consider”
- Governance structures, including Federal Issues, were flagged as needing an explanation in the RMS. This discussion has taken place in previous versions.
- Add language on the constraints of public land ownership in the counties

Pursue Stable Funding and Create Incentives (1-6)

- More of a distinction could be made between Recommendations 1 and 4.
- Recommendation 2 as written makes it seem like we are trying to convene a meeting by the year 2020.
- There were concerns stated about number 4 leading to “push back” Issue 4 has a lot of governance and implementation packed into it.
- Authors were asked to clarify Recommendation 6. Is it supporting IRWMs?
- There is a reference to prop 218 that may need to be a separate recommendation.
- On Issue 5: Cal EMA does not design funding criteria. Looking at DWR what they can do under 1E and 84, that is a very different program. In some cases, many agencies coordinate on a main project – that is a best practice that you will see multiple agencies working together.

Develop and Disseminate Adequate Data and Tools (7-14)



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- Issue with the term BMPs in Issue 7. It seems to relate more to Land Use.
- On 9 the explanation needs to be refined and clarified. It is a very important recommendation.
- “In 10, it seems to be asking for stuff that is already available. It would be nice if we could clarify how we want to enhance existing data.” Note: This language is from the Flood Future Report.

Improve Public and Policymaker Awareness and Understanding of Flood Risk (15-16)

- On Recommendation 15 - Can authors use language “collaboration” instead of “consultation”? Also “should be developing”, instead of “develop”. We are generally inconsistent when talking about tribal government.
- “There is a mismatch between the name of the recommendation and then the explanation. I think we need to be clear about the scope of that recommendation. To me they are very different things.”
- These recommendations did not show up in the Issues section (Issue 3 would be likely nexus).
- On Recommendation 16, change to “work together” instead of “should be working together”.
- There is some overlap between Issue 10 and 16. Authors should be clear about the differences. (One is an outreach issue, One is a data issue – two different problems)

Strengthen Agency Alignment (17-22)

- Recommendation 19 is not clear. Are the locals supposed to determine these areas?
- We should be clear who is supposed to be leading these efforts. Is DWR coordinating them? Note: The Agency Alignment group was flagged as a potential partner for cleaning up language in this section.
- Discussion about Recommendation 19 and 22:
 - There are existing IRWMs, but not everyone (including flood managers) have an equal seat at the table. Also, some of the IRWMs do not have hydrologic boundaries – this is a challenge for flood planning.
 - All of the agencies in 22 have different missions. This recommendation was questioned. However, there is a need for permitting projects for public safety.
- The recommendations discuss projects and regions, but nothing about “river corridor plans”. These are different than watershed planning, and include multiple resources.

Overview of the Flood Future Report Roll Out

Following the walkthrough of the Flood RMS document, Terri Wegener gave a short presentation on the anticipated rollout of the Flood Future Report. She noted that the Flood Caucus would receive an advance draft. The public comment period is anticipated to be 45 days. Regional meetings are also going to take place, so that local flood managers have an opportunity to review the document in person.



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Schedule:

- Preview draft (key stakeholders)
- Public review draft (general public): Late March/Early April 2013
 - Main report, TMs, Highlights
 - DWR/USACE Media Event April 3, 2013
- Regional meetings/workshops – April/May 2013
- Final report: June/July 2013

California Water Plan, Volume 1 Discussion

- *What Key Flood Messages should be moved to Volume 1*

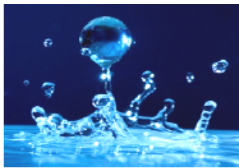
Meeting participants were asked to consider possible concepts for recommendations for inclusion in Volume One of the 2013 California Water Plan.

Response: This goes back to the Volume 1 Strategic Plan.

Recap, Next Steps

Action Items were briefly reviewed.

As is the practice for Water Plan sessions, the meeting was **Adjourned** at the scheduled time.



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Attendance:

Note: (W) = Attended via Web

Participants

1. Tom Chapman, HDR
2. Jami Childress-Byers, California Office of Emergency Management
3. Cheryl Essex, State Parks
4. Mike Granada (W), Orange County
5. Bruce Gwynne, Department of Conservation
6. Pal Hegedus (W), RBF Consulting
7. Al Herson, American Planning Association
8. Todd Hillaire (W), DWR
9. Laura Hollender (W), DWR
10. John Hopkins, IEH
11. Mark Horne (W), Cardno-Entrix
12. Zia Hosseinipour (W), Ventura County
13. Richard Johnson (W), BSK Associates
14. Mick Klasson, Independent
15. Nick Konavaloff, Regional Council on Rural Counties
16. Stefan Lorenzato, DWR
17. Hoa Ly, DWR
18. Anne Lynch, CH2M-Hill
19. Allen Ma (W), Los Angeles County
20. Jenny Marr, DWR
21. Salomon Miranda, DWR
22. Kevin Onuma (W), Orange County
23. Juan Perez, California Office of Emergency Management
24. Christine Quirk (W), Los Angeles County
25. Pat Showalter (W), Santa Clara Valley Water District
26. Jason Sidley, DWR
27. Bob Siegfried, CAWD
28. Steve Stadler (W), Kings River Conservation District
29. Susan Tatayon (W), The Nature Conservancy
30. Iovanka Todt, Floodplain Management Association
31. Eric Tsai, MWH
32. Terri Wegener, DWR
33. Betty Yee (W), Water Boards



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Meeting Staff

34. Lisa Beutler, Executive Facilitator

35. Joshua Biggs, Note Taker